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## BOOK REVIEWS

Students of the archæology of art will welcome the publication in English of Franz Wickhoff's valuable monograph on "Roman Art," published in Vienna in 1895, and now issued in sumptuous form by the Macmillan Company. The work is one of the most important art studies of recent years, and the form in which it is presented to English readers leaves little to be desired in point either of text or illustrations.

One of the chief merits of the book is, that it traces clearly the development of style in art, basing all deductions on a thorough and searching analysis of the aesthetic causes and conditions of artistic change during the period of Roman ascendancy. The genesis of the book will explain its motive.

The rich material illustrative of Roman and early Christian art in the Imperial Library of Vienna had been reproduced in 1670, and again in 1776 in more or less distorted form. A work presenting this material in a way to satisfy modern requirements was needed, and was undertaken by Wilhelm Ritter von Härtel and Franz Wickhoff, Härtel undertaking the description of the manuscripts, and Wickhoff that of the pictures. The latter contributed to the joint work, after exhaustive study, an essay, in which he fully discussed the transformations of style in ancient art to the close of the period of which the Vienna pictures belong.

Previous writers had devoted themselves almost exclusively to Greek or early Christian art, to the neglect of Roman art proper. Wickhoff undertook the task of tracing the evolution of Roman art through its various stages, and the value of his work lies in the fact that he has eschewed mere theory, and given a concise statement, popular enough to be acceptable to the general public, and founded on actual historical remains. Those interested in Roman archæology will appreciate Wickhoff's masterly exposition of the ancient painter's struggles with the problems of his art.

The translation by Mrs. A. Arthur Strong, LL.D., is close to the original, but is eminently readable. The volume is illustrated with fourteen full-page plates and upward of eighty text illustrations, most of which are practically new to the English-speaking public. The volume is a most valuable addition to the literature of art.